

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A composite material comprising a metal matrix within which lamellar talc particles are distributed, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the talc particles carry, at their surface, a cellulose-derived compound attached by replacement of all or part of the hydroxyl groups.
2. (Currently Amended) The composite material as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metal matrix is composed of a metal chosen from Fe, Co, Ni, Mn, Cr, Cu, W, Mo, Zn, Au, Ag, Pb or Sn, of an intermetallic compound or an alloy of several metals chosen from the abovementioned metals, or of an alloy of one or more of said metals with a semimetal.
3. (Currently Amended) The composite material as claimed in claim 2, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the metal matrix is composed of nickel, a metal alloy of nickel with other metals or an alloy of nickel with a semimetal.
4. (Currently Amended) The composite material as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the talc particles have a mean size of less than 15 μm .

5. (Currently Amended) A substrate carrying a lubricating coating, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the said coating is composed of the composite material as claimed in ~~one of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1.
6. (Currently Amended) The substrate as claimed in claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein it is composed of an intrinsically conducting material.
7. (Currently Amended) The substrate as claimed in claim 5, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein it is composed of an insulating or semiconducting material, of which the surface to be treated has been rendered conducting by a preliminary stage of metallization.
8. (Currently Amended) A process for the deposition on a substrate of a coating composed of a composite material comprising a metal matrix within which talc particles are distributed as lamellae, which ~~consists in~~ comprises carrying out an electrolytic deposition using a solution of precursors of the metal matrix of the coating, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the solution of precursors additionally comprises talc particles in suspension, said talc particles having been modified beforehand at the surface by irreversible adsorption of a cellulose-derived compound by replacement of all or part of the hydroxyl groups.

9. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein it is carried out by the chemical route by bringing the surface of the substrate to be coated into contact with the solution comprising the precursors of the metal matrix, the modified particles of talc and a compound which acts as catalyst for the oxidation/reduction of the precursors of the metal matrix of the coating.
10. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein it is carried out by the electrochemical route in an electrochemical cell in which said substrate to be coated constitutes the cathode and the electrolyte is a solution of precursors of the metal matrix of the coating additionally comprising the modified particles of talc.
11. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 10, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the anode of the electrochemical cell is composed of the metal forming the matrix.
12. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the cellulose-derived compound is chosen from carboxymethylcellulose (CMC) and guar.
13. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the precursors of the metal matrix are chosen from complexed or

noncomplexed ionic compounds which can be reduced in solution by the chemical route or by supplying electrons.

14. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the treatment of the talc particles with the cellulose-derived compound (CDC) comprises the following stages:
- preparation of a CDC aqueous mother solution (20 to 80 g.l⁻¹);
 - preparation of a paste from demineralized water (100 ml), talc (50-150 g) and CDC (2-10 g) introduced from the CDC mother solution, homogenization being carried out with mechanical stirring (10-20 min)
 - complete evaporation of the aqueous phase of the paste in an oven (50-90°C) until a dehydrated solid is obtained;
 - deagglomeration of the dehydrated solid in order to obtain particles of treated talc having a particle size identical to that of the initial talc powder;
 - first cycle: washing with demineralized water, centrifuging to separate the talc particles, evaporating the water in an oven and deagglomerating;
 - second washing/centrifuging/evaporating/deagglomerating cycle under the same conditions;
 - sieving.